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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests

### **PORT ALBERNI GAINS COMMUNITY FOREST OPPORTUNITY**

PORT ALBERNI – Today MLA Gillian Trumper and Forests Minister Michael de Jong extended an invitation to the City of Port Alberni to apply for a community forest agreement, bringing economic benefits and control of local forest resources to the city and Alberni valley region.

“This government is following through on its commitment to put local resources into the hands of local communities,” said Trumper. “Forestry is central to the island’s economy – today’s invitation is a great opportunity for Port Alberni and the entire Alberni valley region.

“We are now seeing tangible benefits of the Forestry Revitalization Plan and timber reallocation, as we give communities more control of their local resources,” said de Jong. “This will create employment, provide a timber supply for local mills and value-added operations, and allow communities to direct revenues back to where they’re needed most.”

The City of Port Alberni has been invited to apply for a probationary community forest licence, providing about 20,000 cubic metres of timber annually.

“This is a great opportunity for our community,” said Port Alberni Mayor Ken McRae. “By drawing on the substantial expertise of Port Alberni’s forestry community, we will provide local employment and generate revenues that will help build our economy.”

Community forest agreements are a mechanism by which the Province transfers decision-making to communities that wish to more fully participate in their local forest resource stewardship. Community forest tenures are area-based, giving the holders exclusive stewardship of an area of forest land over the term of the agreement. The probationary agreements are for five years, at which time they may be extended for another five years or replaced with a long-term agreement of 25 to 99 years. Since July 2004, government has provided community forest opportunities for eight communities across the province.

For more information on this community forest agreement and other ministry programs visit:  
<http://www.gov.bc.ca/for/> online.

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1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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